

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-18 (Cancelled)

Claim 19 (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[18]]~~ 23, wherein said heating the precursor material in the crucible comprises inductively heating the crucible, heat from the crucible being conducted to the precursor material.

Claim 20 (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[18]]~~ 23, wherein said heating the precursor material in the crucible comprises heating the precursor material to a temperature in the range of about 1600 to about 1800°C.

Claim 21 (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[18]]~~ 23, wherein said method is conducted at a pressure in the range of about 0.1 to about 3 torr.

Claim 22 (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[18]]~~ 23, wherein said contacting the vaporized precursor material comprises contacting the vaporized precursor material with nitrogen.

Claim 23 (Previously presented) A method for producing silver nano-particle material, comprising:

providing a precursor material to a crucible on a continuous basis, the crucible being housed in a furnace;

heating the precursor material in the crucible to produce a vaporized precursor material;

contacting the vaporized precursor material with a process gas in a mixing region;

drawing a mixture of vaporized precursor material and process gas into an inlet end of a conduit, the process gas cooling the vaporized precursor material to precipitate said silver nano-particle material in a carrier stream; and

separating said silver nano-particle material from the carrier stream.

Claim 24 (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[18]]~~ 23, wherein said providing the precursor material to the crucible comprises providing metallic silver to the crucible.

Claim 25 (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[18]]~~ 23, wherein the process gas cooling the vaporized precursor material to precipitate said silver nano-particle material in a carrier stream occurs in the conduit.

Claim 26 (Cancelled)

Claim 27 (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[18]]~~ 23, further comprising collecting said silver nano-particle material.